

Executive Summary

Global Education as a Career Success Imperative



A Policy Framework for Global Education and Workforce Readiness

By Dr. Kati Bell and Andrew Gordon

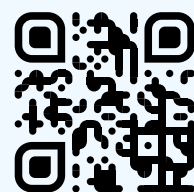
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Foreword



Global education has the potential to be transformational for students who participate. Like many professionals in the field of international education, my personal experiences studying, working, and traveling abroad have deeply shaped my appreciation for global engagement. Done right, global education helps us develop deeper empathy, appreciation of different cultures, and a nuanced perspective on the importance of cross-border collaboration in solving humanity's most critical challenges as well as embracing the opportunities that lie before us. Global education, whether it takes place in Kigali, Shanghai, Doha, or virtually, can truly change lives.



And yet, too often the value of global learning is framed through the lens of personal cultural enrichment. This singular narrative, while valuable and inspiring, is often intangible and under-sells the professional relevance of global education experiences. At a time when the value of higher education is being questioned, AI and other disruptive technologies are changing how we work, and both emerging and established economies are experiencing strain, our sector does not have the luxury of being defined by its laudable yet intangible value. We must be, in practice and perception, more intrinsically tied to the macro goals of higher education institutions and its stakeholders.

This is why I'm particularly proud of DA Global's new policy framework: *Global Education as a Career Success Imperative*. Looking forward, it's essential that global education be framed both for its cultural enrichment, the intangibles, and its contributions to supporting students in developing the skills and qualities needed to be successful in today's—and tomorrow's—workforce.

This operational policy framework is in line with DA Global's approach to ensuring global education has a positive impact on student achievement, career readiness, and institutional impact. Each institutional context will be unique, driven by local and national policies. As such, this policy framework is not prescriptive but a flexible guide that fits a wide range of contexts.

I encourage you to leverage it as a tool to build or enhance the required policies, practices, and relationships needed to more intentionally align global education with your campus' career success goals and initiatives. In doing so, we deepen our sector's collective impact on institutions and the students and employers who rely on them.



Andrew Gordon
CEO & Founder
DA Global Access Network

I. Executive Summary

The future of work is global, collaborative, and adaptive. Employers are hiring for cross-border collaboration, rapid learning, and comfort with ambiguity. Higher education must continue to evolve to prepare today's students for tomorrow's workforce.

Students, families, and policymakers are asking urgent questions of higher education. With rising tuition costs and an uncertain job market, what is the real return on a college degree? Stakeholders are demanding clear outcomes: How are institutions preparing graduates for meaningful, resilient careers in a world shaped by globalization, digital transformation, and cultural complexity?

Global education, whether through study abroad, global internships, virtual exchange, or international student engagement, can provide a powerful and measurable answer to these questions. When developed as a core component of the campus strategic plan, rather than as an optional luxury, global education builds the competencies today's employers are desperately seeking: adaptability, collaboration, problem-solving, digital fluency, and inclusive leadership.

The [World Economic Forum \(WEF\) Future of Jobs Report](#) identifies skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, adaptability, collaboration, and digital literacy as essential for 2030. [The National Association of Colleges and Employers \(NACE\)](#) identifies career readiness competencies such as teamwork, communication, and leadership as critical to employability. Global education is positioned at the intersection of these frameworks. It transforms classroom theory into career-ready practice through high-impact programs that develop these competencies in powerful and applied ways.

“**44%**
**of workers’
skills will be
disrupted by
2027.”**

– World Economic
Forum



This policy paper advances an actionable policy framework that positions global education as a career success imperative. It calls on higher education institutions to:

- Embed global education programs into career and academic ecosystems,
- Provide structured pre- and post-global experience career support,
- Ensure inclusive access to global education opportunities for all students, and
- Collaborate with employers and cross-functional campus teams (career centers, first-generation offices, academic advising, faculty, institutional research) to embed global education into workforce readiness strategies.

Global education goes beyond expanding student international experiences; it plays a vital role in preparing the next generation's workforce for the future. Institutions that embrace this shift will prepare graduates to thrive in a rapidly changing world and demonstrate the enduring value of a higher education degree.

Global EDGE Matrix™

Mapping Global Education to Career Competencies

NACE Competency	Global Experience Examples	Outcomes	Primary World Economic Forum Skill(s)
 Critical Thinking & Problem Solving	Navigating unfamiliar systems; resolving cross-cultural project challenges; evaluating trade-offs under ambiguity	Analyzes complex problems from multiple perspectives and proposes evidence-based solutions	Analytical thinking; Reasoning, problem-solving & ideation
 Communication	Presenting to international audiences; negotiating meaning across languages; writing for diverse stakeholders	Communicates clearly and with cultural nuance across formats and audiences; practices active listening	Empathy & active listening; Communication & collaboration
 Teamwork	Multicultural, interdisciplinary teamwork (in-person or virtual) with shared deliverables and deadlines	Works productively in diverse teams; resolves conflict constructively; builds inclusive collaboration	Collaboration & teamwork; Leadership & social influence
 Digital Fluency (Technology)	COIL/virtual exchange; remote project tools (Zoom, Slack, Miro); data-enabled tasks; AI-assisted research	Uses digital platforms effectively; applies data-aware judgment; demonstrates digital fluency in global and virtual contexts	Technological literacy; AI & Big Data (awareness)
 Leadership	Coordinating cross-border teams; leading subprojects; adapting leadership style to cultural context	Motivates others, delegates, and makes inclusive decisions that move projects forward	Leadership & social influence
 Professionalism	Operating under new norms; managing time zones and constraints; delivering quality in unfamiliar settings	Demonstrates reliability, initiative, and accountability; adapts calmly to setbacks and change	Resilience, flexibility & agility; Quality orientation
 Career & Self-Development	Mentorship with global professionals; reflective advising; exploring international sectors and roles	Builds a growth plan, expands networks, and pursues opportunities aligned to strengths and interests	Curiosity & lifelong learning; Motivation & self-awareness
 Equity & Inclusion	Immersion in diverse contexts; engaging international classmates; community-based learning	Practices cultural humility; designs inclusive solutions; navigates power and perspective responsibly	Empathy & active listening; Social & cultural skills



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